2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

compounds, especially in areas where there are man-eating lions,[1] so that it is no longer an infallible indicator of the hut-owner's rank.

Minor village headmen always allow their superiors to sit on a chair. If village headmen of commensurate status are present, chairs may be sought for them all. But a minor village headman never occupies a chair, even if one is available, in the presence of his superior. At a meeting, for example, a chief occupies a chair and so may his most important *nduna* or councillor. The more important headmen sit alone on separate mats, for a man only shares a mat with his equals, and then only rarely. Junior headmen, however many there are, have to try to squeeze themselves on to one mat or squat on the ground.

Important headmen also have the right of walking in front of their juniors. If there are three or four headmen returning from, say, a court case, they arrange themselves in the pathway in an order which reflects their rank. As they file down the narrow field paths the leader is the most senior among the group. After him come the other headmen and last of all the commoners. This order of precedence is also followed when initiands pass through the tribal initiation ceremonies. The sisters' sons and other matrilineal descendants of important headmen precede those of the less important headmen. At Chiwalo's hut also, I have noticed that the more important headmen sit under the verandah while listening to private cases. The less important headmen sit with the commoners under a shelter or out in the sun.

I have been discussing the visible marks of prestige. But high rank also tends to carry with it some other privileges which are not immediately observable. The most obvious is Government recognition. I have already mentioned that under the 1912 Ordinance, village headmen were recognized by the Administration. These Administrative village headmen, who had certain duties to perform, were paid a small annuity and were in earlier days given a 'book' in which the tax payments could be recorded. To-day, the Yao still describe Government recognition as 'having a book'. Administrative village headmen derived more benefit from Government recognition than merely an

[1] The huts in Plate IX (*a*) and (*b*) are in Nanwera area where there are man-eating lions. Most huts have compounds. A large proportion of huts in areas where there are no lions also have compounds.

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is most powerful, there is a tendency for the Islamic initiation ceremony for boys, *jandu*, and the Islamic initiation ceremony for girls, *nsondo*, to displace the tribal equivalents, *lupanda* and *ciputu*. These Moslem initiations are conducted by Moslem teachers (*mwalimu*) and are not controlled by the chief. Though it also involves the circumcision of the boys, *jandu* is very much shorter and the boys are secluded for only a week. Some say it is becoming more popular because it is less expensive for the boys' parents. In Chiwalo's area the two ceremonies are run concurrently. The boys and girls go through the normal segregation rites at the beginning of the ceremony, but an *mwalimu* circumcises the boys according to Islamic practice. At the aggregation rites at the end of the period of seclusion, the star and crescent appears as one of the symbols along with the whale (*namunguni*), antelope (*mbalapi*), leopard (*cinsui*), and the other tribal effigies which are shown to the boys. Christianity in the south has had a similar effect. The Missions actively discouraged initiation ceremonies in the past. Many of the people in Mposa's and Malemia's area have dropped the custom, or have integrated prayers and other parts of Christian ritual into the ceremonies, though circumcision is steadfastly retained. The effect of these changes is that the important ritual control the chief had over the ceremony has been undermined, and so the prestige attached to it has also begun to fade in these areas. What I describe about the prestige of village headmen and the rights they have to initiation ceremonies is only partially true, and is falling away daily. The correlation I seek to establish is also disturbed by the fact that among the Nguru there is a slightly different initiation ceremony (*cidodolo*) for boys. Most Nguru send their boys to the Yao initiations but there are still some who hold their own traditional ceremonies. These are not within the mystical control of the chief so that some Nguru headmen are outside the competition for the initiation rights. I should say, however, that most compete with the Yao for Yao initiation rights so that this factor is not as disturbing as appears at first sight. In addition, village headmen who move into a new area usually must obtain the permission of the chief before they may use the initiation rights they held before coming into the area.

There are other indicators of the general high rank of village headmen. Junior headmen, like commoners, must give a special

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Arabic greeting to their seniors. This is done by placing the left hand on the chest and bending slightly forward to the village headman, saying, '*Subaye*'. The senior should then respond, '*Alaye*'. Also, important headmen are usually buried in the centre of the village, not in the common graveyard. The tomb of an important headman or personage, usually built of stones, concrete or brick, is called *nsati*. The right to bury in the village must be obtained from the chief 'because the land is his', and in Kawinga's area a fee of 6*s*. must be paid to him.

The Struggle for Government Recognition

Thus far, I have been discussing the ways in which the rank of village headmen may be expressed. I now describe the way in which these marks of prestige are associated in the three categories of headmen we have distinguished, and in what way the competition between them is phrased. I have already described how all the chiefs in the areas to which I am referring are all successors of the original leaders of the invasions, and are usually the present Government representatives or Native Authorities.

The people must recognize the rank of chief because mystical beliefs prescribe activities in one direction, and because the limiting structure of the White Administration does so in another. A village headman cannot hold initiation ceremonies without the permission of the chief because of the mystical sanction, but the chief also has legal authority over his subject headmen. He as Native Authority is recognized by the Government and is its representative to his people. The Native Authority Ordinance (1933) specifically imposes penalties on those who do not recognize the authority of the chief. Under Section 12 of the Ordinance, the Native Authority may arrest without warrant any person who is accused of failing to obey his order or direction, interferes with his lawful duties, professes to be a chief or assumes the duties of a chief without Government approval. Under Section 13(*l*) severe penalties are imposed on any person who conspires against or in any way attempts to undermine the lawful power and authority of any chief or Native Authority. His position is therefore greatly strengthened against the village headmen and I have been told of one or two prosecutions by chiefs under this section. Nowadays, the mere threat of

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councillors. Long ago they held a most important position within the chiefdom. They were the loyal headmen and intimates of the chief, who could therefore be entrusted with the government of outer areas. They were posted to various parts of the chiefdom; kept the chief advised of war and attacks; maintained the peace among the village headmen in their areas; and collected the ivory to which the chief was entitled and sent it to him. Nowadays, the *nduna*s find themselves in competition with other officials who have arisen from the White Administrative system. The chief also finds advisers and councillors in his court clerks and his court sergeants, but the *nduna*s still have much prestige and advise and assist the chief in his administration of the area. Earlier, I mentioned that a senior headman was allowed to have a mat to himself, and only his own friends and people of his rank could occupy it with him. The only people in the chiefdom who could share the chief's mat, were the *nduna*s, and they called him *anyanga* (my friend). Because the *nduna*s were not related to the chief they were in the peculiar position of being able to settle quarrels between the chief and his family: they were the arbitrators in arguments between the chief and his 'younger brothers' (junior male matrilineal relatives), or the chief and his wives. By Yao custom, rank is inherited by a village headman's successor, so that the relationship between the chief and his *nduna*s is perpetuated through successive incumbents. In Kawinga's area, for example, the *nduna*s to-day have the same name and the same relationship and relative position with regard to the chief as the *nduna*s who invaded the country nearly 100 years ago. This traditional ranking of village headmen emerges as soon as the Government alters its policy. Recently, when the idea of group headmen was reintroduced, the chief nominated the *nduna*s to become group headmen—a position not unlike that they held before the White conquest.

There is considerable difference between the size of Administrative villages under those headmen who have the right to wear the scarlet headband and those who have not. Table XV shows this clearly. The mean number of tax-payers under the former headmen is 80, while under the latter it is only 38. Among the village headmen with the right to wear the scarlet headband 62·5 per cent had villages of more than 60 tax-payers, while among other headmen only 25·0 per cent of the villages were in

[48] While the wali thus march solemnly along shaking their wands, the assistants begin singing:

"Ee ulanga animi!"
"To the gate they have shut!"

[53] [54] to which the wali reply:

"Zanwa kushupila!"
"There is no place where to pass!"

The n'wiskila remains at *Lupanda* till everyone else has left; he then sets fire to the shelters and leaving without looking back, runs to overtake the procession and then leads it on towards the village still at a slow pace, while all around in a yelling crowd of delighted mothers and other relatives and the assistants and drummers, all singing and shouting.

When the outskirts of the village are reached, the n'wiskila halts and waits for the *chief* to come out and give them permission to enter. The *chief* brings calico which unrolled on the ground measures the length of the procession of wali. Headed now by their leader, the wali walk over this calico, while the assistants roll it up behind them for the n'wiskila, as it is part of his payment. Flour may be brought him at the same time, carried by the chief's wives.

At an *Unyago* I witnessed at Kumwanwa's, the hut was called on the bank of a stream at the edge of the village where a bamboo arch had been erected. The arrival of Chief Malenya at this point with calico and flour was the sign for a demonstration by his young men who ran forward as if in battle, firing off blank rounds from old Tower muskets and executing a kind of war dance.

After the calico has been handed over, the *chief* returns to his kraal and the procession continues into the village, across the village open space to the fence round the chief's house. There, the wali enter by a gateway and disperse over the courtyard where they find [77] *their sleeping-mats laid out ready for them by their mothers.* The n'wiskila lays his "tail" on the leader's mat to bring good luck thereafter. With Mlanala, there is no further part for the wali, but in some cases they are called upon by the *chief* to give an exhibition of their dancing and drumming. The wali sleep that night in the kraal and disperse the following day.

In the morning, the n'wiskila takes his "tail" and a stirring stick made from a millet [78] stalk with the roots on it, and strikes the ground at points in a row in front of the chief's house. *Here the pots of beer which have been prepared are placed in rows, those chosen by the chief and those chosen by the n'wiskila, and drinking commences.* The n'wiskila, before he joins in, takes the wali to an ash-heap in the village and there sprinkles them with medicine from a grain-mortar after which they go with their elsewear behind a house and change into new clothes. They then go and salute the *chief* by clapping their hands and depart to their villages, duly initiated and somewhat subdued by what they have been through. Their new names or "nom" may be given them by the elsewear either at *Lupanda* [58] or after the initiate is back in his village.

3:Stannus D-5 (ca. 1912) 1922 FT7 Yao FT7

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40. *Gonera kwaku ndakuta!*
Lying on the rock, hunt!

This is a slang expression which in full would read, "It is nice and warm lying on a rock in the sun, but it is not so comfortable as being in bed in company with your wife; you can go on waiting but you won't get anything." This might even be said to a dog, watching as a dog will, every morsel of food lifted to its master's mouth.

41. *Kulapilila mani pa nkina!*
To have hopes of water for maggots!

It is a custom before lying down to sleep on the floor mat, to take it up and pour boiling water on the earth floor to kill any blood-sucking maggots (Congo floor-maggot, *Argas*). If you see a pot cooking on the fire, you naturally think there is food being prepared but you may be disappointed; it may only be the pot for heating the water to kill the maggots. The saying is thus used to a man who has made an assignation and is disappointed but goes on waiting.

42. *Kuluma upwi!*
To bite cockroach-like!

The cockroach is described by natives as going up to what it will eat, remaining quiet for some moments, and then suddenly taking a bite. This is said of a man who comes up to you smiling and then hits you a hard blow.

Among the Yao as among other tribes that I have previously mentioned,[1] signs of salutation to a superior are made by clapping the hands or patting the breast or buttock with one hand, at the same time crouching down. A woman will go off the path and kneel, looking away from a superior passing along the roadway.

A person going by the door of a hut where others are sitting, will say "*Kwinjapo kuno!* At the door here." Passing behind anyone, he will say "*Ku-mpa 'mwi!* At the back!" Meeting anyone on a path, a man will simply say, "*Ishe*, here," adding perhaps, "*Ku-shuli!* all is well?" A chief or headman on returning to his village after a journey, is greeted by the women with trilling of the tongue (*Ku-lulula*).

Man and wife do not greet each other in the morning. The wife rises first and draws water and places it in the hut for the husband's use but nothing may be said.

When a visitor is entertained and a chicken cooked for a repast, the "pope's nose" is always for the visitor. The right hand only is used in dipping into the common pot. A man of small importance, though replete, will go on making pretence of eating at a common meal by taking very small amounts so that his superior shall finish first, and rise and go away before him.

I may here add the words used by the Yao for the sounds made by various animals; they are interesting to compare with those of other languages:

[1] 'Notes on some tribes of British Central Africa,' op. cit., p. 280-288.

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909) 1910 FT7 Yao FT7 Marovi FR4

case ordeal might be administered; if adjudged guilty the accused would be burned on a pile of wood. M 695

Evidence is given without taking any oath; a false witness is not punished. M 696

Justice is occasionally summary. At Mponda's, after conviction of adultery with one of the chief's wives, a man's throat was cut on the spot. Drowning was the usual punishment with Mponda.

Punishments for all offences practically meant payment.

Customs, Salutations, etc.

The correct salutation among Machinga Yao and Matanja on meeting is clapping the hands, the hands in front of and at right angles to the body parallel to each other, thumbs against the fingers. The clapping should be continued for ten minutes after having passed; after passing a chief it should be continued for half-an-hour. M Y 576

Another form consists in slowly beating the breast with the right hand, the head slightly inclined forward. The lower in station makes salutation first to the higher, a man to a chief, a woman to a man; exception is made in the case of an old woman, who is saluted by the man. Scattered all over the country a raising of one or both arms is a common form of salutation, but is probably only a corruption of the military salute. M Y [559] [887]

Slapping of the arms or thigh with the right hand is also seen, among old men usually. In imploring mercy from, or on the first occasion of meeting, the chief, a man lies prone on the ground and catching the foot of the chief, puts it on his neck—a sign of absolute submission. Women kneel at the approach of a man. Words and expressions of salutation are few.—*Mapo* (=heart) being the only old expression used. Now commonly one hears a word (sounding like *salue*) probably a corruption of good morning, and the Swahili greeting *Salaleri* with the double hand-shake of Mohammedans. M Y [201] [562] [177]

A man returned to his village after an absence waits awhile, then his wife comes to him and kneeling greets him, *mapo*, her husband returning *mapo*.

Years ago, a man of any importance was received with firing of guns and shouting. A headman is received now with *Honeyahale*, the women wobbling their tongues in their mouths. Ashes are put on the head as a sign of joy. M Y [152]

In the morning the husband and wife do not greet each other, but in the village friends "give each other good morning" (=*Mapo*). On waking in the morning, a woman cracks all her joints (=*Kulasa chale*). She then massages her husband and cracks the joints of his fingers. M Y [501] [576]

One man wishing to see another goes to his house, and squatting outside the door cries "*Aho!*" three times (=*Hiere*), at the same time clapping his hands. If no answer be given he goes away, even though he knows the man is within, no answer meaning that the inmate does not wish to be seen. If invited to enter he does so, the man of the house rises and gives him salutation. He makes small M 574 576